

**Bear River North Regional Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Bridgerland Applied Technology College**  
**Logan, Utah**  
**Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007 – 8:00 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.**

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**In attendance:**

Vern Gunnell  
Commissioner John Hansen  
Dawn Hollingsworth  
Jim Hooker  
Randy Hopkins  
Kelly Johnson  
Roger Jones  
Michael Liechty  
Evan Maxfield  
Lana Powell  
Thom Smith  
Susan Thackeray  
Scott Williams

United States Air Force, B.A.T.C. Cache County  
Cache County Council Member  
Division of Child & Family Services  
Hooker Appliance  
Department of Workforce Services  
E.A. Miller  
Bear River Association of Governments  
Cache School District  
Wheatland Seed  
State Farm Insurance  
Alcoa  
Economic Development  
U.S.U. Extension Agent 4-H Youth Development

**Excused:**

David Bryan  
Commissioner William Cox  
David Farnes  
Colyn Flinders  
Peggy Madsen  
Chad Munns  
Bruce Rigby  
Dawn Skorka (Chair)  
Michelle Wilson

Schreiber Foods  
Rich County Commissioner  
Pioneer Care and Rehabilitation  
Division of Rehabilitation  
Box Elder County Employees  
Munns Manufacturing  
Zions Bank  
Wal-Mart  
Life-Skill and Individual Needs Center

**Department of Workforce Services Staff:**

Jill Bingham  
Debbie Herr  
Gary Kennison  
Carrie Peterson  
Debbie Sparks  
Susan Wright

Brigham Employment Center Manager  
Regional Program Manager  
Business Services Program Specialist  
Administrative Secretary  
Logan Employment Center Manager  
Regional Council Liaison

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. **Welcome**

Thom Smith led the meeting in Council Chair, Dawn Skorka's absence.

All D.W.S. staff and Council members were welcomed to the meeting.

The quorum for the meeting was established with sufficient attendance of voting council members to carry all action items and motions.

2. **Consent Calendar Action Items**

Thom Smith called for approval of the minutes from the August 9<sup>th</sup> Bear River North Regional Council meeting.

**Action:** Commissioner John Hansen made the motion, Vern Gunnell seconded, and the Council unanimously approved the August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes.

3. **Vendor Application**

Tara Connolly, D.W.S. Program Specialist, presented information about the vendor application before the Bear River Regional Council for a vote of approval. Upon approval of the Regional Council, the vendor application will be presented to the State Council for approval.

The provider, Utah Local Technical Assistance Program, is applying to be approved as a training vendor for the Department of Workforce Services. Courses offered include Flagger Training, Traffic Control Technician, and Traffic Control Supervisor. The program costs are \$40, \$60, and \$285. The wage at placement is \$10 - \$12 per hour. The certification type is American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA).

The provider is registered as a post secondary proprietary school, which administers certificates of completion to successful students. The training program will be located on Utah State University's campus, and will meet campus standards. The provider has been in business for over one year.

Tara Connolly concluded that the provider meets all the specified D.W.S. training vendor expectations.

**Action:** Thom Smith called for a motion from the Bear River Regional Council to approve the vendor application for the Utah Local Technical Assistance Program with the recommendation that the application be presented to the State Council for approval. Mike Liechty made the motion, Lana Powell seconded, and the motion carried with Council's approval.

4. **Committee Reports**

**A. Marketing and Training for Employers Task Force**

An overview was provided of the 2006 Management and Legal Seminar "Play Ball at a Higher Level". The seminar was offered to employers through the Utah Society for Human Resource Management (S.H.R.M.), Utah State University Extension, and the Bear River North Regional Council on Workforce Services. The seminar was conducted October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

Breakout sessions were provided regarding –

- Business Ethics
- Legal Aspects of Harassment
- EEOC Overview and Practical Tips
- Consumer Driven Health

The Joint Marketing and Training for Employers Task Force would like to plan to present the 2007 Management & Legal Seminar Conference as it continues to be a successful event each year.

### **B. Training and Job Seekers Committee Report**

Lana Powell reported that the Training and Job Seekers Committee has pursued the development of the Ready-to-Work curriculum with the Bridgerland Applied Technology College (B.A.T.C.).

Debbie Sparks, Logan Employment Center Manager, reported that the Ready-to-Work Program has been very positive for D.W.S. customers. The Logan Employment Center is working with 80 youth to help them obtain their GED as part of the program.

Vern Gunnell reported that the training includes customers arriving on time, the program is open-ended and allows the youth to set their schedule of when they participate in the training. The training focuses on the soft-skills needed to maintain employment.

The training program is 25 to 30 hours a week to allow student participation in the program. The B.A.T.C. has been working to accommodate those enrolled in the program.

Some of the Ready-to-Work programs are available on-line which allows employers to offer on-the-job training. The individuals can participate in the courses on-line and take the hands-on tests at the B.A.T.C.

**Action:** Thom Smith called for a motion to approve the Committee reports. Evan Maxfield made the motion, Kelly Johnson seconded, and the Council unanimously approved the Marketing and Training for Employers, and the Training and Job Seekers Committee reports.

### **5. Regional Youth Council Report**

Scott Williams, Youth Council Chair, reported that the Council last met September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The Council was provided with a Workforce Investment Act (W.I.A.) Youth Provider Report. There are many slots available for youth to receive W.I.A. services. They are asking for referrals and flyers have been distributed for recruitment. It was reported that in the Summer Youth Opportunity component, 20 youth dropped-out of the program.

Scott noted he attended the State Youth Council meeting and they discussed how to help the youth gain the skills they need to maintain employment. It was noted that other regions are experiencing similar types of problems in their areas with youth. He said overall, the question is, "are we helping youth find jobs that will really help them improve their lives?" Scott noted that he also questions if the needs of the youth are being met and if they are being taught how to help themselves.

Randy Hopkins, D.W.S. North Region Director, explained that the Clearfield Job Corps Center has hundreds of slots open for youth training and they cannot fill them. Job Corps students can obtain their high school diploma and vocational training. On-site housing and meals are provided. The Center is managed by a private corporation, Management Training Corporation (M.T.C.) and is federally funded. They would like to increase recruitment of students.

**Action:** Thom Smith called for a motion to approve the Regional Youth Council report. Roger Jones made the motion, Commissioner John Hansen seconded, and the Council unanimously approved the Regional Youth Council report.

6. **State Council Report**

Evan Maxfield reported on the highlights of the January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007 State Council meeting.

Evan represented Dawn Skorka at the State Council Chairs meeting. In Dawn's absence, she was elected Chair of the State Council Chair's Committee.

The Regional Chairs reported on the Council sponsored events occurring in each of their regions.

- Mountainland Region is offering Health Care classes.
- Central Region is experiencing successful round table meetings for the automotive industry.
- Eastern Region is funding a training program for nurse practitioners.

Evan attended the Operations and Marketing Committee meeting. The group discussed the eJobs Web Referral System. Workforce Services' new job referral and job placement system, went into full production earlier this month and has received very positive feedback and record usage. So far, over 176,000 job seekers have referred themselves to jobs, over 2,000 seekers have registered for work and over 22,500 job openings are currently listed by Utah employers.

A legislative review was provided regarding the possibility of a consolidation of D.W.S. with the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Eligibility Services (B.E.S.). The legislature is discussing transferring approximately 250 B.E.S. staff to D.W.S. to generate efficiencies in State government.

Evan noted that there was discussion on the workforce boards and the size of the Councils that are needed.

Utah is far ahead of other states with efforts to streamline processes.

A waiver proposal was approved at the State Council meeting to increase Workforce Investment Act (W.I.A.) set aside funds to develop and expand the Department's Incumbent Worker Training Programs (I.W.T.P.). The proposal requested approval for departmental flexibility with W.I.A. Adult Training Funds. The waiver will allow the Department to transfer 50% of the Adult Training Funds to the I.W.T.P. This waiver will help the Department to better utilize funds and serve customers.

The Utah Incumbent Worker Training Program is funded by the Federal Workforce Investment Act and administered by the Department of Workforce Services. The purposes of the program are to: 1) provide grants to employers to assist with certain expenses associated with skills upgrade training for their full-time employees, and 2) help those workers gain the skills that keep them employed and increase their wages.

The funding will be available on an application for each applicant employer and/or consortium of employers to provide their employees with training to acquire specified skills. The waiver would allow D.W.S. to use the funds to meet the training needs of employers. The funds would be from statewide "set-aside" funds to increase the funding available to support the program.

The decision regarding how much funding will be transferred to the program will be made on a year-by-year decision basis. The waiver will allow the Department to transfer the funding upon the State Council's review. Upon the Council's approval, the request will be submitted to the Department of Labor for the program year of 2007. The waiver will be effective for two years, depending on reauthorization of funding or the need to transfer funds.

DWS sets aside 15% of the federal funds for statewide activity in the "set aside funds". Currently, D.W.S. has a waiver that will allow the Department to move up to 50 % of the funding to the Incumbent Worker Program to support training for employers.

Vern Gunnell noted that most of the B.A.T.C.'s funding goes to skill upgrade training. He asked how agencies would be able to access the funding.

A Request for Proposal will be announced on the D.W.S. website and the funding will be available in the new fiscal year.

Vern Gunnell asked if the funds were like those used for the TANF program.

Randy Hopkins explained that the I.W.T.P. is different as the funds can be used with employers to upgrade the skills of their existing employees.

Thom Smith asked if the funds would be transferred on a state or regional basis.

Randy Hopkins would like to bring some numbers for on-the-job related training and information about the funds being transferred on a state or regional basis to the next Council meeting.

7. **Regional Director's Report**

Randy Hopkins thanked all Bear River North Regional Council members for their partnership and support of the task forces and the full Council.

Randy introduced new Council member, Dawn Hollingsworth. She will represent the State of Utah, Department of Human Services, Division of Child & Family Services. Dawn will replace Grant Bartholomew.

Council members were informed of the following items of interest:

- The Department of Workforce Services is meeting and surpassing their performance standards.
- The Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) program has been reauthorized with increased participation rates. The Department has been successful in meeting the required participation rates for Food Stamp timeliness and accuracy. The North Region's participation rates, for October – July were 98.7%. Utah has met the participation rates and is above the national average. A "dash board report" is being used by the Department to determine if the region is meeting the federal goals.
- The Utah Department of Workforce Services has garnered national recognition, as the department was awarded two separate Pinnacle Awards from federal agencies for program excellence. The Department of Labor awarded its first ever Pinnacle Award to Utah's Unemployment Insurance program for best overall Unemployment Insurance (U.I.) program performance in the nation. The U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded Utah's Food Stamp Program the Pinnacle Award for enhancing administration of the program through technology. Executive Management has thanked and congratulated their staff responsible for D.W.S. receiving these prestigious awards.
- D.W.S. has been approved for a face-to-face waiver for the Food Stamps program. In the past, there were federal requirements for face-to-face interviews to decrease fraud and mistakes. Based on the review of the call center it has been observed that the face-to-face interview would not be necessary. All of Central Region and the Clearfield Employment Center have been approved for the waiver. With the waiver, the federal requirements allowed a 50% decrease in face-to-face interviews for the entire State of Utah. The waiver will be applied in February of 2007.
- A "true call center" will be set-up in Ogden for eligibility customers. The eligibility customers who go into the Clearfield office will conduct their business through the call center. The idea of the call center is to generate departmental efficiencies by maintaining services with less staff.
- The number of employers using the on-line services has increased. The State goal is to have 65% of employers using on-line services to post their recruitments. The North Region is making significant strides in meeting the state goal. The regional average for this fiscal year is 65.24%.

- On-line services are available 24-hours-a-day / seven-days-a-week. This allows employers to post a recruitment request any time of day, any day of the week.
- Gary Kennison, D.W.S. Program Specialist, reported that the on-line services for employers have been improved as feedback noted that in the past job seeker summaries were not very detailed. The Department has added required fields for the seeker summary to make them more complete. This will help employers make better decisions as they have the increased information.
- Two new resources are available to employers;
  - 1) The “flat filling system” which allows employers to copy a significant volume of their job orders in any data format (Excel / Word) and automatically post the information in the job orders.
  - 2) The Department now has the technology to allow a “sweep” of the employer’s website to capture the information needed for recruitments from their webpage.
- Jill Bingham reported that the Brigham E.C.’s Business Services representative has worked to help employers learn how to access the on-line services that are available.
- Effective January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007 electronic benefit cards will start being mailed to customers. The cards will be mailed to the customers who will call for the pin to activate their cards. The mailing of the cards will reduce the selling of the cards by customers, which is fraudulent.
- Center managers were thanked for the efficiencies they are using to manage the day-to-day business of the Employment Centers.
- The State legislature passed a law that all Regional Council meetings must be recorded on tape. In the future, Bear River Regional Council meetings will be recorded.
- Randy noted that a new Internet application, on the public assistance side of the department, would allow customers to apply for supportive services on-line. The new application will be rolled-out –
  - February, in American Fork.
  - March, Central Region.
  - June, Clearfield.

#### 8. **Round Table Brainstorm Discussion**

Thom Smith reported that the Executive Board met and discussed the possibility of conducting Round Table discussions for the North Region. The Executive Board’s proposal is to discuss and set goals for the committees to determine what can be done in the Bear River region.

The Executive Board has identified “Biotech” as a new industry sector to be considered. The Central Region has been successful with their Round Table Discussions for the automotive industry. The goal will be to determine what the Council should be focusing on in the Bear River area.

Roger Jones noted that the employers are worried about finding employees to train to meet their needs.

Debbie Herr, D.W.S. Regional Program Manager, recommended that the Council target youth who have dropped-out of school or are under educated. The Council may like to consider how the youth can be engaged in the training. It has been proposed by the Department that all regions support a “Youth Job Fair”. A job fair could be planned specifically for in the Bear River area.

Lana Powell recommended tying the Youth Job Fair to the Job Readiness training program that is being offered in high schools and at the B.A.T.C.

Susan Thackeray suggested thinking to include the older population in the job fair as well. She noted many new homes are being built in the Tremonton area (500 building lots). It was explained that housing development is starting to follow the employment.

9. **Other Business**

The Regional Council will be meeting in May to set their goals for 2007. Susan Wright, Regional Council Support Specialist, will schedule the Committee meetings and inform the Council members of the dates and times.

10. **Public Comment**

No general public representatives or non-members of the Regional Council attended the meeting.

11. **Adjourn**

Thom Smith thanked the Council members for their attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.